



**UNITED NATIONS**  
**EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND FOR ZIMBABWE**  
**CHARTER**  
**June 2009**

**1. OBJECTIVE**

The overall aim of the Emergency Response Fund (ERF) for Zimbabwe is to improve the timeliness and appropriateness of humanitarian response through the provision of a flexible resource that can be drawn on quickly. The emphasis of the ERF will be to support rapid response projects seeking to contribute to sustaining lives and prevention of further erosion of livelihood assets through supporting positive coping mechanism of communities. The fund will also be available to strategically fill gaps (geographic or sectoral) within an overall emergency response plan.

As it is important to maintain its funding niche, the Fund would not normally target issues of chronic or structural social problems or long-term development needs. It may, however, go beyond the strict delivery of tangible relief goods and services to support activities necessary to enable humanitarian response in Zimbabwe such as needs assessment, security and capacity-building of local partners. Furthermore, the Humanitarian Coordinator retains the ultimate authority to make a decision on whether any situation developing on the ground would qualify for funding through the ERF.

**2. ACCESS TO THE FUND**

In order to facilitate timely disbursement of resources, the ERF will continuously receive and process proposals for funding throughout the year as long as the Fund is not depleted. All funding decisions will continue to be taken in a transparent manner through consultation with clusters, the ERF Board and the Humanitarian Coordinator.

Ideally, project proposals should be based on needs assessment. International and national NGOs that are deemed to have sufficient capacity, capability and credibility with local authorities and/or communities to undertake appropriate humanitarian interventions will have access to the Fund. In addition, the International Organization for Migration, United Nations agencies and the Red Cross Movement may submit project proposals to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Zimbabwe. (see annexed criteria)

**3. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES**

- *Respect international standards* for the provision and management of international assistance.
- *Respond flexibly* to locally identified emergency needs and meet gaps in ongoing assistance activities.

- *Build capacity* within, and promote linkages with, national and local authorities and civil society organizations in policy development and administration, in analysis and in identification of needs, and in the formulation, management and monitoring of activities.
- *Extend coverage* of assistance activities to under-served areas, consistent with government priorities and existing knowledge of vulnerabilities in the country.
- *Encourage* an equitable distribution of services and resources to vulnerable and marginalized groups.

#### **4. THE ROLES OF THE PARTNERS**

##### ***Implementing organisations:***

- Formulate proposals in consultation with stakeholders especially the intended beneficiaries and local communities as well as the coordination mechanisms such as clusters and field coordination mechanisms.
- Submit applications to OCHA for project funding. All applicants must use the attached standard Project Proposal and Budget Format for project submissions. Applications must be in English.
- Submit supporting documents such as copies of annual reports, latest audited accounts and registration documents to OCHA.
- Sign a written Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with HC regarding approved projects, using the template cleared by the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs (attached in the Annexes X and Y).
- Facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of projects in collaboration with OCHA; and
- Submit narrative and financial reports to OCHA as described below. Rules governing administration of the fund require all applicants to submit a final project and financial report prior to release of the final 20% of the approved budget. The first tranche of 80% of the grant is released upon signature of the MOU for all applicants. UN Agencies and IOM must submit financial and narrative reports in line with the clauses stipulated in the MOU.

##### ***Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA):***

- Screens and reviews initial proposals through the ERF management team and OCHA Humanitarian Affairs Officers.
- Presents proposals to the relevant clusters for technical evaluation and advise the applicant on necessary changes. The technical evaluation involves review of project to ensure coherence with cluster priorities either as defined in the CHAP or response plans for an on-going emergency, as well as assess if objectives are Specific, Measurable, Achievable and Realistic as well as Time bound (SMART).
- Upon receipt of technical comments and finalised proposals, presents these (by email) with recommendations for approval/disapproval to the Advisory Board. Please note that Advisory Board members may also submit proposals to the ERF but cannot vote on their own proposals.
- Serves as the Secretariat for the AB and communicates its decisions in writing to the applicant (s).
- Resolves any overlaps and competing proposals in consultation with field coordination mechanisms and the clusters and fosters partnership as appropriate.
- Upon approval of a project, prepares an official agreement
- After the agreement is signed by both the applicant and the Humanitarian Coordinator,

OCHA requests a transfer of funds from its Geneva Headquarters in two instalments: 80% of the approved budget at the beginning of the project and a further 20% of the approved budget after completion of all reporting requirements for all applicants.

- Funds will only be disbursed to an established implementing partner's bank account with capacity to receive funds through electronic transfer.
- Provides periodical and final substantive and financial reports on the use of the Fund to the contributing donors, as required/appropriate.

### ***Advisory Board***

The Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) will form an Advisory Board (AB) comprising of five voting members, as follows – Three (3) UN agencies with a humanitarian aid mandate, and Two (2) NGOs. OCHA ensures the secretariat for the Board and as such is an automatic but non-voting member. The three other UN representatives shall be nominated by the United Nations Country Team for a rotating term of 12 months while the NGO representatives shall be nominated by the NGO coordination bodies for a similar period. Both international and national NGOs should be represented on the AB. Alternate members shall be appointed to perform the duties of the core AB members in their absence.

The AB will review project proposals with reference to the criteria in this charter and make decisions by simple majority. The AB will make recommendations to the HC for final approval or rejection of project proposals. The AB will have 2 working days (usually consulting by telephone or e-mail as opposed to convening *ad hoc* meetings) to make a recommendation on a project proposal to the HC, and if necessary convene a meeting at the expiry of 2 days to resolve any disagreements in the final decision-making process. In the event an AB representative fails to respond to consultations by the given deadlines, it will be assumed as concurring with decisions taken by the majority of the other AB members.

## **5. PROJECT PROPOSAL**

All project proposals should be submitted to ;

Mr Fernando Arroyo,  
Head of Office, OCHA Zimbabwe,  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Takura House  
67-69 Kwame Nkrumah Ave, Harare Zimbabwe.

Email: [arroyof@un.org](mailto:arroyof@un.org) with a copy to Lilian Nduta – [nduta@un.org](mailto:nduta@un.org) and Sally Muwani - [muwani@un.org](mailto:muwani@un.org).

Please see *Attachment A* for the presentation of project proposals and *Attachment B* for budget outline.

Applicants shall specify on the proposal (where indicated) the implementing partners to whom they will directly channel the funds, if any.

## 6. REPLENISHING THE FUND

The Emergency Response Fund will seek replenishment with fresh contributions on a rolling basis until such time as the Fund's exit strategy (see section 14 below) is activated by the Humanitarian Coordinator.

Upon disbursing the Fund's resources down to a balance of US\$250,000 or 20% of the available funds, the HC shall consult with donors and the AB to develop a replenishment strategy or activate the exit strategy. (The last \$250,000 may still be committed to a proposal or proposals deemed by the AB and HC to be more urgent than any others likely to compete for the last of the balance in the near term.)

Contributions to the Fund shall be treated as un-earmarked (within the selection criteria of this fund charter) and pooled, i.e. they lose their donor identification. If donors request for a disposition of their particular contribution such will be calculated on a first-in-first-out basis (i.e. the first donor's funds are attributed to the first approved projects, and so on).

## 7. CRITERIA FOR AND RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF FUNDS BY IMPLEMENTING ORGANISATIONS

In order to maximize the impact of the Fund:

- Funding should cover project activities up to a maximum of six months period only. In case of necessity, the implementing organization may request a no-cost extension. The request must be submitted to OCHA at least 30 days prior to the project's planned ending date.
- OCHA and the Advisory Board has the right to recommend funding less than the amount requested (per line item or overall).
- At least eighty percent (80%) of the total project budget should be allocated to direct project inputs.
- Funding is **not to be used to purchase capital assets that are retained by the implementing organisation** (such as vehicles and office equipment). Capital assets necessary for implementation of the project such as generators or water pumps can be purchased.
- Funding is not to be used for international travel expenses.
- Payment of staff/personnel and rental of equipment should be limited to the additional resources required by the NGO to implement the project.
- The maximum allowable administration/operation support cost of a project is to be no more than **seven percent (7%)** of the budget. This should be calculated as a percentage of the project sub-total, with the total budget not exceeding \$250,000. Any agency Head Office administrative overhead costs that are directly related to formulation and management of the project will be considered in consultation with OCHA Administrative Office. These costs however, will need to be included as part of the 7% administrative/operational support costs.
- The cost of import or customs duties (or any similar fee) imposed by overseas governments on goods imported or services provided cannot be covered by the ERF.
- Expenditure within a budget line must not exceed the approved budget line by more than **twenty percent (20%)** without the prior written approval of OCHA and must be matched by equivalent decreases in other lines. (OCHA will respond to such requests within five working days of receipt.)
- Unlike other budget lines, personnel costs must not exceed the amount approved in the

budget. Full costs of personnel 100% dedicated to the proposed project may be submitted in the project budget. Costs of regular staff may be included partially in the budget if they have demonstrable supervisory or support roles vis-à-vis the proposed project.

- Budget lines for contingency expenses shall not exceed five percent (5%) of the total project cost. Expenditures against this line can only be allowed if the implementing organization has asked for permission and received written authorization from OCHA prior to utilising it. In addition, it is necessary to explain in detail in the budget each component of the contingency expenses.
- A narrative explanation for each budget line must be included.
- All budget lines must be fully broken down to unit prices and quantities wherever applicable.
- The Fund shall normally grant a maximum of US\$250,000 per project. The maximum funding will be reviewed by the Board regularly.
- No funding will be approved for an applicant with three on-going projects
- In the event of any common appeal or similar mechanism for the Zimbabwe crisis, projects funded by the Fund will be counted in the appeal for financial tracking purposes. Contributions to the Fund by donors will similarly be counted as contributions towards the appeal.

Applicant organisations must use the attached standard Project Proposal and Budget Format for project submissions. Applications must be in English.

## 8. PROJECT SELECTION

The AB will assess each project on the basis of the following five selection criteria:

Criterion	Score* [0-3]
1. Project addresses and will have a significant and positive impact on the assessed needs of population affected by life-threatening emergency.	
2. Intervention is urgent and delay would result in unnecessary risk to lives or livelihoods (for either first responses or gap filling interventions).	
3. Project complements other actors' activities and reinforces collaboration.	
4. Project in line with 2008 Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP)	
5. Project links to longer-term programming/ does not undermine development programming or local coping mechanism.	
6. Agency is established in area/ has capacity to respond	
<b>Total Score</b>	

\*0=criterion not met; 1=partially met; 2=satisfactorily met; 3=fully met

The AB may seek comments from relevant cluster leads, international organizations and individual NGOs as needed, as well as Zimbabwean authorities with specific technical expertise, including programme and administrative staff, prior to approval of a request. However the AB will make the recommendation for approval to the Humanitarian Coordinator. Project selection must ensure compliance to the principles of the Fund (Section 3 above).

Comments on each proposal may be sought by OCHA and the AB from the relevant cluster/sectoral working group. Applicant organisations are expected to have coordinated fully with the relevant sectoral coordination group.

## **9. SERVICE STANDARDS OF FUND ADMINISTRATOR**

Each MOU, prior to signing, will be reviewed for clearance by OCHA Administrative Office (AO) in Geneva, which serves as the fund administrator. Under normal circumstances, OCHA AO will communicate clearance to the HC within 3 working days of receipt of the draft MOU. On specific issues OCHA reserves the right to consult the UN Office for Legal Affairs (OLA), which would incur delay the clearance process. Nonetheless, to prompt a rapid decision, OCHA AO will communicate its request for consultation to OLA within three working days of receipt of the draft MOU. After clearance of the MOU by OCHA AO, the HC will sign it with the applicant agency. Thereafter, OCHA AO shall convey the disbursement request to UNOG Finance within ten working days of receipt of the signed MOU. An electronic copy of the signed original MOU shall be sufficient for OCHA AO to complete the disbursement request. Furthermore, OCHA AO shall follow up with UNOG Finance at least on a weekly basis to ensure that the Controller has completed each requested disbursement. OCHA shall charge 3% of fund receipts to administer the fund.

## **10. ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS**

Organisations undertaking activities funded by the Fund will enter into a standard Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for activities detailed in the project proposal, plus requirements for implementation, accountability, funding, reporting and evaluation requirements. Any non-standard variations on these may be added as needed to a particular MOU, but risk delaying approval and disbursement. The recipient must seek approval for any proposed significant changes to an activity or budget (i.e. a change of more than 20% in the main budget lines) and seek the AB approval to such changes, through OCHA, one month prior to enforcing the changes. OCHA reserves the right to disallow such changes. A request from the recipient agency for amendment of the MOU shall be processed with the same deadlines on the part of the AB, the HC, and the fund administrator.

OCHA retains the right to monitor, review and/or evaluate activities funded by the Fund as a basis for assessing the project. This would be undertaken in consultation with relevant organisations.

## **11. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

The implementing organisation shall produce a Project Interim Report per a brief standard template if the grant duration exceeds two months. The due date for this interim report shall be four weeks after the halfway date of the grant period.

An audited Final Narrative and Financial Report is required following the completion of each project to enable the release of the remaining 20% of the balance, and should be forwarded to OCHA Geneva for review. A template will be provided for the narrative report. The financial report should be signed by an authorized representative of an auditing firm. Final audited must be undertaken by a UNDP hired auditor. The ERF shall meet the audit costs. The narrative and financial reports must be submitted within 45 days of the end of the grant.

The dates when reports are required, as determined in the paragraphs above, will be specified in the MOU, and must to be complied with.

## **12. FUND EXIT STRATEGY**

The Fund will continue to seek replenishment as long as humanitarian needs in Zimbabwe remain severe enough to merit a multi-organisation response, and organisations are not funded to full capacity for humanitarian projects by direct funding or through other funding channels. The HC will determine this, in consultation with OCHA, donors and the IASC Country Team.

When it is determined that the conditions necessitating the Fund's continued operation no longer are present, the HC will seek to commit the balance of the Fund to residual humanitarian projects that meet the criteria in this charter. If no such unfunded projects can be found, the HC will propose to the Fund's donors and the IASC Country Team a relaxation of the Fund's criteria sufficiently to allow it to support quasi-humanitarian transitional projects, until the Fund is exhausted. As a last resort, uncommitted Funds may be returned to donors, starting with those who contributed to the Fund last.

Contributions to the Fund shall be treated as un-earmarked (within the selection criteria of this fund charter) and pooled, i.e. they lose their donor identification. If donors request for a disposition of their particular contribution such will be calculated on a first-in-first-out basis (i.e. the first donor's funds are attributed to the first approved projects, and so on).

## **13. REVISION OF THIS CHARTER**

The Advisory Board, in consultation with the Humanitarian Coordinator may revise this charter when deemed necessary.

## **14. FURTHER INFORMATION**

Any queries on the Fund can be directed to: Lilian Nduta via e-mail: [nduta@un.org](mailto:nduta@un.org)

## ATTACHMENT A: Project Proposal Format



### UNITED NATIONS EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND FOR ZIMBABWE PROJECT PROPOSAL

#### 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

**Contact Details:** Contact person name  
Organisation, address, tel/fax, email

#### 2. PROJECT SUMMARY

**Project Title:**

**Organization:** Implementing organization (identify partners, if applicable)

**Project Manager:**

**Location of Project:** District, Province

**Duration:** (Start date to end date)

**Sector of Intervention:**

**Targeted Population:**

**Total Project budget:** US\$

**Total funds requested from ERF:** US\$

**Other funding sources:** Specify the source and amount of funding received as well as in-kind contributions

**Bank account for funding:**  
[Bank name] [Bank address]  
[Account number] [Account title]

### **3. Context**

3.1 Target beneficiaries- Description of the targeted population (number, status, gender, age, current location),

3.2 Problem Analysis (with a clear indication of the source of information)- This section should provide sufficient information to determine the priority of the intervention(s) and the critical needs of the target population. A brief analysis of the situation should be provided, including previous efforts made to address the problem. Indicate dates, sources of information and describe the most critical needs identified.

3.3 Other interventions/related projects in the proposed project area since the inception of the project

### **4. Objectives-**

The objectives must be measurable and realistic. The project proposal must include the **OBJECTIVE** of the project, followed by **MEASURABLE INDICATORS** (expected results) and indicating the **IMPACT** the project will have.

Project objectives must be **SMART**: **S**pecific, to avoid differing interpretations; **M**easurable, to allow monitoring and evaluation; **A**ppropriate to the problem statement; **R**ealistic and achievable; **T**ime-bound indicating a specific period of time during which the results will be achieved.

4.2 Project strategy (and any changes in this since project commencement)

4.3 Important assumptions used during project formulation

4.4 Project partners

2.5 Details of funding from other sources during the project duration that were not included in the initial proposal

### **5. Implementation of the project**

#### **5.1 Human and material resources involved**

This section should indicate clearly the human resources, equipment and commodities required for project implementation as well as financial support from other partners. (These costs should be broken down by line items in the budget section).

5.2 If any project partners are identified, describe their roles and responsibilities in relation to the proposed project. Linkages with local government plans or structures should be explained. Specify the implementing partners, if any, to whom funds resulting from this application will be directly channelled.

5.3 Any anticipated constraints (financial, logistics, security etc.) affecting the implementation of the project should be explained.

### **6. Calendar and action plan**

A work plan matrix with a timeframe for each activity should be included. (Annex B)

- 6.1 Linkages or complementarity with other related activities in the area
- 6.2 Description of coordination/cooperation with other actors providing assistance in the area
- 6.3 Actual starting date and duration of the project against planned starting date and planned duration. Explain any variation (including details of approved project extensions)
- 6.4 Constraints to project implementation

## **7. Monitoring/evaluation**

This section should describe a plan to monitor and evaluate the project using measurable indicators as stated in the project proposal as benchmarks. The methodology used to monitor the project should be explained. Progress and final reports should include the results of monitoring and evaluation exercises conducted during the project period.

## **8 Budget**

See Attachment B.

## **ATTACHMENT B: Budget Format**



### **UNITED NATIONS EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND FOR ZIMBABWE BUDGET FORMAT**

**1. Personnel (should be listed by functions, e.g. Field Manager)**

- International staff
- Local staff

**2. Project Inputs (for beneficiaries; should be listed by item)**

- Type of Items (expendable / non-expendable, food / non-food etc.)

**3. Transport and storage costs**

- Rental of vehicles or running costs of applicant-owned vehicles
- Freight and other transportation costs
- Storage costs

**4. Contingency (a maximum of 5% of project inputs)**

**Sub-total**

**5. Applicant Administration/Operation Support Costs (should be listed by item and include itemised HQ overheads related to this project)<sup>1</sup>**

- Stationery and office materials
- Rental
- Communications
- Utilities

**Grand Total**

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<sup>1</sup> See attachment C

**Sample Budget Summary Sheet (USD)**

**Name of organisation:**

**Project Title:**

**Project implementation period:**

	<b>No. of Units</b>	<b>Unit Cost</b>	<b>No. Months</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Applicant /other donor contribution</b>	<b>ERF contribution</b>
<b>Personnel (should be direct programme staff listed by functions, e.g. Field Manager)</b>						
International Staff						
Local Staff						
<b>Project Inputs (for beneficiaries; should be listed by item)</b>						
Type of Items						
(expendable / non-expendable, food / non-food etc.)						
<b>Transport and storage costs</b>						
Vehicles - rental or running costs of applicant-owned vehicles						
Freight and other transportation costs						
Storage costs						
<b>Contingency (a maximum of 5% of the Project Inputs)</b>						
<b>Project Sub-total</b>						
<b>Applicant's Administration/Operation Support Costs (should be listed by item)- should not exceed 7% of the project sub-total</b>						
Stationery and office materials						
Rental						
Communications						
Utilities						
<b>Grand Total (USD)</b>						

**ATTACHMENT C: Sample of Items admissible under Administrative costs budget line**

<b>Sample of Items admissible under Administrative costs budget line. Please note that the list is indicative, not exhaustive</b>	
1	Office Stationery - Assorted types of printing paper - pens - flipchart paper, - writing pads
2	Office rent or part of it
3	Printing toner
4	Assorted files
5	Rental of additional equipment such as printers, copiers and computers for the project
6	Equipment maintenance
7	Communications - Fax - Telephone- fixed line and mobiles - Internet and email services
8	Office utilities
9	Banking and Cash Handling charges
10	HQ Administrative Costs for the project